

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, BM

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS: HELICOPTER PROJECT - TRAINING

1. WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED PROBLEMS IN CONNECTION WITH THE DURATION OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMS UNDERWAY AND, IN PARTICULAR, WITH THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCE OF THE TRAINEES.

2. THREE OFFICERS CURRENTLY RECEIVING TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TRAINING HAVE BEEN URGED BY THEIR INSTRUCTORS TO REMAIN FOR ANOTHER THREE WEEKS TO TAKE THE FIELD MAINTENANCE COURSE DESIGNED FOR THE CURRENT GROUP NOW IN COUNTRY. NO ADDITIONAL COSTS, OTHER THAN PER DIEM EXPENSES, WOULD BE INVOLVED. THE OFFICERS WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THE COURSE, AND BOTH BELL REPRESENTATIVES AND THE S/NM AIR ADVISOR HIGHLY RECOMMEND THIS BE DONE. THESE MEN ALSO WOULD BE IN AN ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION TO ASSIST THE NEW GROUP, PARTICULARLY IN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE.

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3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEFICIENCY OF THE NEW GROUP OF

15 TRAINEES WAS APPARENT DURING ORIENTATION BRIEFINGS. TO OBVIATE EMBARRASSMENT TO THEM BUT WITH THE AIM OF ACHIEVING MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM THE COURSES AS PLANNED, WE ARRANGED FOR THE ENTIRE GROUP TO TAKE AN ENGLISH QUALIFYING TEST AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY. (FYI: THIS PROCEDURE

IS PART OF THE NORMAL PRACTICE FOR USUAL TRAINING PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY AID AND WAS EXPLAINED AS SUCH TO THEM. END FYI). RESULTS OF THE TEST WERE VERY DISAPPOINTING; ONLY FOUR PASSED WITH ANY KIND OF FAVORABLE SHOWING AND SEVERAL WERE VERY POOR.

4. WE ARE SEEKING A FULLTIME INTERPRETER FOR THE GROUP OF FIVE TRAINEES GOING TO CONNECTICUT, AND, IN THE MEANTIME, THE BURMESE MILITARY ATTACHE HAS AGREED TO SEND A MEMBER OF HIS OFFICE ALONG WITH THE GROUP TO BE PRESENT WHEN THE COURSE BEGINS MARCH 31. THE REMAINING TEN TRAINEES PROBABLY WILL FARE BETTER IF APPROVAL CAN BE OBTAINED TO PERMIT THE THREE OFFICERS (PARA 2 ABOVE) TO TAKE THE SAME COURSE AT FORT WORTH.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: SEEK GUB APPROVAL TO PERMIT THE THREE OFFICERS TO EXTEND THEIR TRAINING AND APPRISE APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING THAT THIS ISSUE WILL BE MINIMIZED IN THE FUTURE. SINCE WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE GUB CONTROLS SELECTION OF TRAINEES, HOWEVER, YOUR ALERTING US TO ANY LANGUAGE PROBLEMS OF SUBSEQUENT CANDIDATES WOULD BE APPRECIATED SO ADEQUATE INTERPRETING ARRANGEMENTS OR SPECIAL ENGLISH CLASSES CAN BE SET UP. KISSINGER

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